THE ESSENCE OF IT....

GRAPHIC
BY
THOMAS TANDY

.....is evident in the fact that Essence Magazine has consistently and conspicuously ignorred the activities and personalities of the West Coast Black women's population. This policy of benign neglect has been recognized by the Eastern "home" office with the tokenistic establishment of a lonely West Coast office manned exclusively by Liz Gant- the West Coast Editor and staff.

Ms. Gant actively initiated the idea of taping an interview with BWOA members, expressing their concerns about Essence's "Ignore 'em to death" policies but was given an assignment by her superiors that preempted the interview and left BWOA representatives neglected as usual.

Unshaken, and with dauntless courage we made the tape anyway and Sisters it's a moonnnster! E. Anne Warren, Osa Russell, Valerie Jo Bradley, Virginia Johnson, Sharon M.Driskell and Ahimsa Sumchai, in a one hour interview expressed a gamut of Black womens concerns in an effort to reconcile the Grand Canyon sized rift in communication that Essence magazine has perpetuated between Black women of the "Sunrise" and Black women of the "Sunset"

WHAT IT IS

Volume III, Nos. 11/12
November/December, 1975

A Newsletter of Black Women
Organized for Action
P. O. Box 15072
San Francisco, Ca. 94115

SO!

You finally want to join a Committee

Well, BWOA can put you to work! We've got committees inside of committees on top of committees, and at least one of them is concerned with you concerns....if not, then form your own! For meeting times and gathering places contact the coordinator of your choice:

Committee	Coordinator
Media	Valerie Bradley
IWY	Flora Gilford
Fundraising	Alma Jackson
Political Action	Maxine Ussery
Education	Idaree Westbrook
Newsletter	Ahimsa Sumchai
Membership	Linda Pierce
Health	Peggy Day/Jackie Boyette
Employment	Pat Walton

"I didn't mean to harm anyone. I only went into that police station to see what they were going to do with my brother... Things look bad right now but I feel God is with me I am thankful the Center is handling my defense.

— Marine Sergeant Roy Patterson in Cordele, Georgia

Sapphire Don't Either!

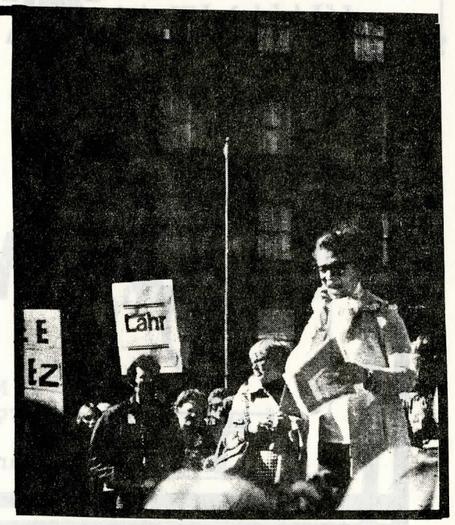
Addressing a crowd of 4,000 at Union Square, BWOA's own Aileen Hernandez spoke at the Alice Doesn't Day gathering - the NOW sponsored Women's Strike on October 29.

Aileen, former national president of NOW introduced a roster of speakers from the Bay Area, including Margo St. James on the subject of prostitution. Sally Gearhart, writer and Professor of speech at S.F. State University. Helen Fama, a member of the S.F. Commission on the Status of Women and Miako Wakabayashi a Japanese exchange Feminist affiliated with the Oakland Feminist Women's Health Collective.

The crowd was described as "attentive" and "responsive". At one point the P.A. system expired and an "organic" substitute spontaneously created as 40 to 50 women on stage became a human amplifier repeating the speakers phrase by phrase in unison. The effect was dramatic - an electrifying chorus.....

'AILEEN'

DYNAMIC AS ALWAYS



SAMMI

I've just returned from a three day conference held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression. The five hundred participants in the conference represented one hundred and eighty organizations from across the country and succeeded in the developement and refinement of a nationwide strategy to defeat Senate Bill 1 - which happens to be a piece of proposed legislation created by former Attorney General Mitchell and directed by former President Nixon. Among other things, Senate Bill 1 would, with the endorsement of President Ford and leaders of both major political parties, effect into law all the criminal acts of the good ole' Watergate years.

Other positive work was developed around the issues of halting police crimes, intensifying the struggle to free the San Quentin Six, Reverend Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10 of North Carolina and the Puerto Rican nationalists, the oldest political prisoners in the Western Hemispher - they've been held for over 20 years.

In light of the celebration of the U.S. Bicentennial, the Native American organizations are planning their own happening, to show they refuse to die a genocidal death in this land of the free, home of the brave.

If you're interested in knowing more about the conference and the proposed work the Alliance is planning to combat racism in this country tune in on KPFA, December 4, at 7:30 p.m. and listen to a few of the Bay Area delegates...I'll be on.

see ya!

SAMMI

SECTION

By Sammi Madison

health fair

By Peggy Day

Our Health Fair on Sunday November 16, was a beginning- and a good one! Resources available to and concerning Black women were introduced all day at the Western Addition YWCA.

Women of all ages, from grandmothers to teenages availed themselves of the information provided by various Bay area organizations concerned with health and related subjects.

An estimated 150 to 200 people attended and enjoyed themselves.

An informal self health workshop was held which included techniques of vaginal self examination and basic body care.

The American Cancer Society showed interested women how to examine their breasts and what to look for in cancer diagnosis.

The Press attended, including The Sun Reporter, Channel 5 and radio station KDIA.

Available throughout the day wan an exercise class instructed by the YWCA's own Ms. Joyce Smedley, who also provided lively music for the af"fair".

- Newsletter staff -

Ahimsa - Sahwan - Ellie

Editors note:

Jamie Williams is a first semester Freshman at S.F.S.U. and a precociously gifted young sister - one of a group active in the organization of a campus affiliate of BAOA

POET TREE

I The Adolescent
by Jamie Williams

Hidden within these words
is a message I've been trying
to give myself
a problem I want to face and solve
the realization that
I am afraid of change
yet I am going through
a rapid change of sight

A sudden disorder
of routine
completely changed
merely by time
and as times
spin and spin
so do I
spinning along moving
all to fast for this
adolescent

Body and mind
changing from
the games of fun to
the games of life
starting true existence
of both childhood
and womanhood

Discovering my body
is no longer that of a child
but that of a woman
desiring the touch of a man
my mind is no longer that of a child
but that of a woman
desiring more knowledge

My goals have already
been set
obstacles will sometimes
get in the way

because the future is the door to hell
the door that I the Adolescent
must make it through

announcements

The RAINBOW SIGN in Berkeley where many of us have enjoyed some good times, viewed some beautiful art, participated in poetry readings, etc. is having a fundraising drive. It is now time for them to raise the balance of the $55,000 to secure their building. Fundraising is being conducted on three levels (1) among their members; (2) in the general community; and (3) within the business community. For the general community fundraising; they are planning a concert for Sunday, December 7 at the Berkeley Community Theater. Watch the media for announcements of who will be appearing. If you would like to donate some money to the RAINBOW SIGN, send it to 2640 Grove Street, Berkeley, Ca. 94704

The Black Women's Unit of the Berkeley YWCA (Director, Harriet Y. Wright) is holding weekly group discussion and exploration into issues of concern to Black women at the Y-House (2600 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, Ca. 848-6370). They are planning a series of "Black Dialogues" the first of which will be "Black Women in the Media". Call for the date and time.

The Women's Action Center of Berkeley is sponsoring a Tennis Tournament/ Fundraiser Evene for Saturday, December 6, 1975 at the Tennis Town Racquet Club in Pleasanton. The tournament begin at 1:00 p.m. Contact Kerry Dunn or Pat Broussard at 845-4656 for additional information.

INTRODUCING

A Collection Of Poems
By Christine Copney

SURVIVAL TACTICS **With Illustrations**
By Yvonne Browne

The Credit Union has a home!!! 944 Market Street, Rm. 617, San Francisco. Correspondence for the Bay Area Feminist Federal Credit Union (BAFFCU) should be sent to P. O. Box 846, San Francisco, 94101. The Credit Union's savings deposits now total over $35,000 and loans are being made.

Volunteers are needed to work at the office. If interested, call the Women's Center (431-1414) for information.

The Commission on the Status of Women invites you to its FIRST ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE on Sunday, December 7, 1975 - 50 Fell Street, San Francisco. The hours are 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. There will be refreshments and entertainment.

Wajumbe (the delegates) is celebrating the 6th year of working for Black People.

This event is a fund raiser for Wajumbe. It is also an opportunity for people of Afrikan desent to come together in a festive and educational spirit.

Please plan to attend. We need your support in making this event a success.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

i got this friend.... his name is Charlie Saunders but we call him Cosmic Charlie because his thinking goes often beyond earthly issues. He is the percussionist with "The Midnight Band" - the group Gil Scott-Heron creates with.

Anyway... Cosmic Charlie edits a newsletter called "Cosmic News" in which he keeps folks abreast of issues that might otherwise escape us as we rush flustered through life blinded by overconcern with the rent.

Sometimes i forget there is a war being waged here in AmerikKK until i get news from the front lines.

the death toll is rising... the following is a serious article reprinted from "Cosmic News" and intended, my sisters, to bring you down.....

"When I stopped at the light a green truck pulled up beside me on my right side. I saw this man jump out of the truck and run over to the policeman standing in the traffic island. He was waving his ID card and I could tell he was a policeman in civilian clothes. He was pointing towards this beige Volkswagen sitting at the light. The policeman in civilian clothes ran over to the little car and pulled this passenger out. There was one guy in the front and one guy in the back. He got them all out except the driver," stated a young woman.

A 33 year old man said, "I watched the cops stand in front of the car, place his gun about two inches from the windshield and pull the trigger. It looked to me like he just aimed and fired.

Another woman, "The policeman stood in front of the car and was pointing the gun at the driver in that stand they usually have - feet apart - when I heard a shot, but I couldn't believe that the cop had shot the person. But then I saw the driver of the Volkswagen slump over in the seat, and I started running closer thinking "my God, why did he shoot him point blank like that?"

"The seargent was standing in front of the Volkswagen with his gun drawn. He had pointed his gun directly at the windshield of the car with both hands on the gun. His legs were spread apart and his arms were extended. Five or ten seconds later he pulled the trigger. He fired one shot. It seemed to me that he just aimed the gun and fired."

One of the passengers, Calvin Lewis said, "I asked him (the officer) why did you shoot him point blank? He said the car must have moved. I said, Man, the car couldn't have moved. I'm sitting on the car and I didn't go no where!"

The other passenger reported, "I'm sitting there thinking we're just going through the basic routine of arrest...It's like he (the policeman) just decided to pull the trigger. I turned my head to see fire come out of the gun, then I looked and Miles' blood came out of his chest like it was a fountain. .....Miles just couldn't believe he was shot!"

all quotes from the Los Angeles Free Press July 25 pg. 33

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